let it go at that, and we won't bother to get up a puzzle picture of us both and label it 'Find the cur.' Have a cigar? No? They aren't campaign smokes. You needn't 'a' been afraid of 'em."

He lighted a gaudily-banded perfecto, puffed it a minute, and went on:

"I don't know why I'm going to waste time talking to you. I've never took the trouble before to defend myself or to try to make other folks see my view of the case.

make other folks see my view of the case. But you're a well-meaning chap, for all you're such an ass. And maybe something's

due you after the luck I put you up against on that tour of yours. So I'm just going to squander some words on you. And after that I'll ask you to trot off home, for

've some riding to do.'

He shifted his cigar to an angle of his

mouth and resumed:
"In the first place, you give me the usual rank old talk about the way I treat the people of the Mountain state. Why do I boss this city and the state? Because the

people want me to. Why do I run things

to suit myself in my railroads and my legislature? Because the people want me

to. Now you're getting ready to say that's a lie. It isn't. Why don't I grab the food

off some man's dinner table? Because he don't want me to. He'd yell for the police

or pull a gun on me if I tried it. Why do I

saddle that same man with any taxes I choose? Why do I elect my own crowd to

ffice and work franchises and everything

else just as I like? Because he does want

me to. If he didn't he wouldn't let me. He could stop me from stealing his dinner.

And he would. He could stop me from

who ever lived, could have made ten people

in the whole world do what those people

nouth and resumed:

CALEB CONOVER, RAILROADER

BY ALBERT PAYSON TERHUNE, AUTHOR OF "THE SHADOW OF THE PROPHETS"

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CHAPTER VII-Continued.

ALEB CONOVER was a netoriously bad rider. Horsemanship must be learned before the age of twenty or never at all. And Conover was well past forty before he threw g over saddle. But he loved the exercise, and took special joy in buying and mastering the most unmanageable horses he could

How so wretched a horseman could avert bad falls or even death was a mystery to all who knew him. It was seemingly by his own sheer will power and brutal

It was one of the sights of Granite to see Caleb Conover careering down the main avenue of the residence district, backing some foaming, plunging hunter, whose wildest efforts could never shake that stiff, indomitable figure from its seat. With walloping elbows and jerking shoulders, the railroader was wont to thunder his way at top speed up and down suburban byways; inciting his horse to its worst tricks, temptis it to buck, kick, wheel or rear. And hen the maddened brute at length indulged in any or all of these maneuvers, a joy of battle would light the rider's face as, with unbreakable knee grip and a selfssession that never deserted him, he flogged the steed into subjection.

In telling Letty that there was no horse he could not safely manage and control Conover had but repeated an oft-made boast-a boast whose truth he had a score of times proven. He was not a constant cared little for such recreation. But when he was angered, or perplexed, or desired to freshen jaded nerves or brain, his first or-

As he rode so semi-occasionally and as the horse he selected was usually one which even his pluckiest grooms feared to exercise, the brute in question was fairly certain to be in a state of rampant, rank 'freshness," and to require the best work of two men to lead him from the stables to the porte-cochere. As few steeds could be be withstand such training as Conover The inflicted, he was forever changing mounts. The horse of the hour would wax so tame docile as to preclude further exciteor would break a blood vessel or go ead lame in one of the flerce conflicts with its master. Then a new mount must

was barely a month earlier that Caleb | in her employer's presence vered Dunderberg and had bought e great black stallion at an outrageously him, for Dunderberg not only signs of cringing to the master's but daily grew flercer and more

Mrs. Conover trembled, wept ternately prayed and watched the and attering a plant of driveway beyond her window, the kallrender was wont to dash at breakneck speed along the farther country roads, atop his buge black horse, checking the mad for occasional battles-royal with

rought, coming atop the previous excitement of the "pleasant home hour," the strain on Letty was too great. Clinging convulsively to Anice, the poor woman wept with a hysterical abandon that almost frightened the girl. Tenderly, lov-ingly as a mother the girl soothed the trembling old lady; comforting her as only a woman of great heart and small hand can; quieting at length the shuddering hys-

erics into half-stifled sobs.
Had Caleb Conover (upstairs wrestling with an overtight riding boot) chanced upon the group, he would have been sore puzzled to recognize in this all-tender, pitying maiden the coldly reserved secretary on

whose unruffled composure and steady nerve he had so utterly come to rely. "Oh. it's horrible—horrible!" panted Mrs. Conover, finding voice as the sobs sub-Yes, yes, I know," soothed Anice. "But

"You don't know. You can't know. It isn't only the horse. It's everything! I sometimes wonder how I stand it. Each time it seems as if-"Don't. Don't, dear! You're overwrought and tired. Let me take you upstairs

No. It does me good. There's never been any one I could talk to. And sometimes I've felt I'd give all this abominable money and everything just for one hour's friendship with any one who really cared."

But I care. Really, really I do. Let me

'Help' me?" echoed the weeping woman, with as near an approach to bitterness as her crushed spirit could muster. "Help me? How can any one help one of Caleb Conover's slaves? And I am the only one them all who has no hope of escape iers can leave him and find work fight have the satisfaction of fighting ick. But I haven't courage enough to do her of those things. What can I do?" It was the first time in their three years intercourse that Anice Lanier had seen or so much as suspected the existence of this feeble spark of resentment in the

"Do you know. Miss Lanier." went on Letty "at one time I hated you? Yes"— as she noted the pained surprise in the tear-swimming eyes-"actually You were all I was not. You you. He never deferred to me, or to any

had shaken off Mrs. Conover's clinging hands, and was on her feet, her "Don't be angry with me! Don't!" whim-pered the invalid. "I didn't mean any harm. You said you wanted to help me. And oh, you said you wanted to help me. And oh, if you only knew what a help it is to be able to speak out for once in my life without four of that terrible will power of Caleb's choking me sient! I don't hate you now. I didn't as soon as I saw you cared nothing for him. For you don't. I see more than propie think. And—I suppose it's wick-than propie think. And—I suppose it's wick-than propie think of such things—but aleb's choking measure and the second as I saw as a soon as

through the portieres into the library, he saw only that its two occupants were seated one reading, the other crocheting, in polite boredom, each evidently quite willing that their prolonged session of dreary small talk should be interrupted.

"Good evening Appl Letter" and a drawer.

a drawer.

"If you were counting on telling me all about it." he observed, "I can save you the trouble. Here's the whole account."

"Does your 'account' include the recital of a mob incited to smash furniture, insult women and attempt murder? Or of such talk should be interrupted.
"Good evening, Aunt Letty," said Clive, as

he stooped over the excited woman and kissed her. "I called to see Mr. Conover on a matter of some importance. The footman was not sure whether he could—or would see me or not. So, while I was waiting for him to find out, I thought I heard your in here and ventured in. Good evening. Miss tanier. You'll pardon my left hand?" The right he held behind him, yet in one of the mirrors Anice could see the knuckles were swathed in plaster. The hand he offered, too, was bruised, cut and discolored. "I-I had a slight accident," he said hastily, noting her glance. "Nothing of impor-

nais as the colossal failure of the century. 'You've given up?" she asked in quick

Her monosyllable told little. Her eyes, which he alone could see, told more. Clive was satisfied. was satisfied.
"I have not given up," he said simply, out of swaddling clothes they've got brave"and I am not going to."
"Oh, but, Clive." put in his aunt, finding her voice at last after the shock of seeing her voice at last after the shock of seeing and strikes and grumbling and hard-luck stories than all the whole meanly diction. Standish walk thus boldly into the lion's den. "You'd really better give up the whole silly business. I'm sure Mr. Conover would be so pleased."

his own sheer will power and brutal strength of mind and body that he remained triumphant over the worst horse, was never thrown nor failed to conquer his Solomon tells us 'maketh the heart sick.' I'm still in the race. Very much in it." "But, then, why-why have you come here. Clive?" urged Letty nervously. "Mr. Conover and you are such bad friends. I'm sure there'll be an awful scene, just as there was that time four years ago.

And I do so hate scenes. After this even-"I'm afraid there may be a 'scene,' as you call it," admitted Clive, "but it won't be at all on the order of the one four years ago. And I hope it won't be in your presence either, aunt.'

Again his eyes met Anice Lanier's. She nodded ever so slightly, and he knew that when the time should come he could trust her to remove the timid woman from the danger zone."
"Why do you want to see Mr. Conover?" asked Anice, "or is that an imperti-

"Not in the least. I want to come to an understanding with him. Affairs have reached a point where that is necessary." "An understanding?"

"Yes. As long as he contented himself with ordering his followers to lampoon and villify myself and the league I made no equestrian. He never rode for the mere complaint. It was dirty, but I suppose it pleasure of it. In ordinary moments he was politics. But when he muzzles the press, orders the police and the mayor of the citles to refuse me fair play, and sets things to attack me and illegally steals the state conventions, it's time to have it out der was for his newest, worst-tempered with him face to face. That is why I am here, and why I shan't leave until I have seen him. I hadn't meant to say all this to you." he added, ashamed of his own "Oh, I'm certain Mr. Conover won't like

moaned his aunt. "I'm quite certain e won't. Now, if you'd only speak tact fully and pleasantly to him-"Well," came the Railroader's strident tones from the hall outside, "where is he,

jerk that set the curtain rings to jingling, and Caleb Conover, in riding dress, hatted, spurred and slashing his crop against one booted leg, filled the narrow doorway Mrs. Conover gave a little gasp of fear. Alice Lanier let fall over her bright face the mask of quiet reserve it always wore Clive rose and took a step toward his unwelcoming host.

And so, for ten seconds, the rival candidates faced each other in silence-a silence heavy with promise of storm.

CHAPTER VIII.

Caleb Conover Listens and Answers.

"Well," began Conover, breaking the short pause, "what do you want?" "I want to speak to you-alone," answer-I Standish

"Come up to my study. Gaines, tell the groom to keep Dunderberg moving. I'll be down in ten minutes." In silence the railroader led the way up-

stairs. He passed into the study, leaving Clive to follow. Nor, as he seated himself in his big desk chair, did he request his visitor to sit down. Ignoring these slights, Clive took up his stand on the opposite side of the desk

"Now, then," said Caleb, "get-through your business as quick as you can. What do you want?"

"To speak to you in reference to this ampaign." "Had enough, eh?"

"Altogether too much of the sort you've nflicted on me."

'Good! You've got more sense than I thought. There's two kinds of fools; the kind that put their heads in a hornet's nest once and then have sense enough to admit hey've been stung, and the kind that keeps their heads there because they're too daffy o see the exit signs or too pig-headed to to see the exit signs or too pig-headed to confess that hornet stings ain't the most diverting form of massage. I'm glad to see you belong to the first class. I'd place you in the second."

who cut down your taxes and throw the burden of assessment on the very class of people you have already defrauded to the top of your bent. Corruption of the foulest sort has been smeared by you all over

help you, won't you, please? I want so can be fixed. Sit down. We'll—"
"You're mistaken!" broke in Standish, re-

in this fight to stay. I-

"Mr. Conover," said Clive calmly, though were white with pressure, "when your lackey, Shevlin, made that same proposition to me, he thought he was making a per-fectly straight offer. And, judging by the standards you've taught him. I suppose the suggestion was almost holy compared with older woman's cowed soul. It dumfounded the majority of his tactics. So I didn't her and left her for the time without pow-thrash him. He knew no letter; for the same reason I don't thrash you."

You were all I was not. You do the most good. I guess you'd have a afraid of him. He deferred to faint s'spicion you'd been in a fight before you was through. But I presume you didn't before, and that you're discovering what come here tonight to give an encore per- no one else ever dreamed of. If only I never cared for me. And he did care for formance of your grand stand play at Grafton. It seems I started on the wrong idea just now. You don't want to drop out gracefully or to sell out, and you prefer the soothing attentions of the hornets to—" "Yes, if you put it that way, Mr. Con-

now. Go ahead.'

Both women, with the wondrous art wisch their sex alone can master, had dropped into conventional attitudes with their backs Conover drew a typewritten bundle from

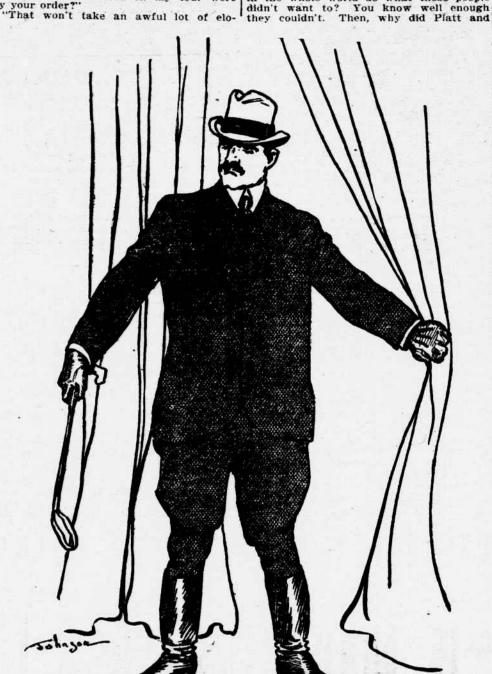
> women and attempt murder? Or of sub-orned town officials, bought policemen and muzzled editors? If not, it is incomplete. I went on that tour prepared to meet all legitimate obstacles. I met only fraud, violence and the creatures of boss-bought conspiracy. It is to call you to account for that and to ask how far it was done by your personal sanction that I have come to see you. Also to ask if you intend to give me fair play in future." "Fair play?" echoed Conover in genuine bewilderment. "Son, this is politics, not

ping pong."
"Every one in God's world is entitled to fair play. And I'm here to demand it." "God's' world, eh? My friend, when you've traveled about it as long as I have

tired of being owned by a political boss

"You're a terribly original feller, Standish! That remark, now, about all men being 'born equal.' It was made in the first place, wasn't it, by a white-wigged, short-panted hero who owned more slaves than he could count? 'Born equal!' Maybe all men are. But by the time they're out of swaddling clothes they've got bravestories than all the whole measly dictionary put together. Get down to business, man. This ain't a p'litical rally. Cut out the fine talk, can't you? My horse is wait-

"I've told you already what I wish. I want to know if you will fight like a man for the rest of the campaign, and if the outrages I encountered on my tour were by your order?"



The Portieres Were Pushed Aside.

quence to answer. What was done to you up state was planned out by me, and it isn't deuce-high to what'll drop on you if ple want to be bossed. Because they'd you're still alive when the state conven-

"Meaning me?" queried Caleb blandly. repeated Clive, his last re-'You cur!' maining shreds of temper thrown to the winds. "I was told I'd meet this sort of reception, but I couldn't believe there was man alive who had the crass effrontery to confess he was a wholesale crook, and that he was going continue one. You've sapped the integrity; the honesty, the freedom of this city and state. You've made us a by-word for every community in America. You've trailed your iniquitous railroad across the state, crushing every smaller and more honest line, until you are czar of all our traffic. sending to legislature your own hench-men, who help you steal franchises, and who cut down your taxes and throw the the face of this commonwealth, till "But you want to get out of this p'ticular people are stricken helpless and speechless under it. Who can help them? Are there ten lawyers in this state who don't wear hornet's nest, I spose, without given life-like an imitation of a man shinning down from a tree, eh? Well, I guess that your collar, and whose annual passes from your road aren't granted them on the your road aren't granted them on the "You're mistaken!" broke in Standish, resenting the more civil tone of his host as he had not resented his former rudeness, "I'm in this fight to stay. I—"

written understanding that such courtesies are really 'retainers?" Then, when I try to help the people you have ground to the dirt—when I try to wipe the filthy stain from the Mountain state's shieldeven then you will not fight me fair, as "Mr. Conover," said Clive calmly, though the knuckles that gripped the table edge any other common felon, and you feel so secure in your own stolen position that you actually boast of it, and propose to continue your damnable knifing tactics. Why, Caleb Conover, you don't even know how vile a thing you are! He paused, breathless, still furious. The Railroader was leaning back in his big chair eyeing the angry man with genuine amusement.

ame reason I don't thrash you.

"That and maybe a few others," laughed Conover, in no wise offended. "I climbed up from yard-boy to railroad president by frequently jamming my fists in where they'd of you. Honestly, son, it's hard to take you reformers serious. You're all so dead sure you're sayings what's never been said could buy one of you Civic Leaguers at my own estimate of you, and sell you at your estimate of yourself, it'd be the biggest deal I ever made. Now don't get red and try to think up new platitures to beller at me. think up new platitures to beller at me. I've listened pretty patient, but I think it's my turn to do a little shouting, too. I've heard you out. Now, maybe it'll do you no "Hold on a second."

The railroader crossed to a screen at the farther end of the room. Thusting it aside he said to a stenographer who sat behind it, pencil and pad in hand:

"We won't need you any longer. This words out of your system in the last few minutes. I'll answer you as best I can, and then maybe in future us two'll under-

and then maybe in future us two'll under-stand each other the better." In spite of himself, Clive Standish listened. This thickset, powerful man, whose blazing temper was proverbial, had attended the young candidate's rather turgid arraignment with every evidence of goodnatured interest. He had endured insulting epithet with almost the air of one who hearkens to a compliment. And, in answering, he had spoken so moderately, so at variance with his usual mode of address, that Standish was utterly puzzled, and was half ashamed of his own vehemence. What

Standish remained standing at the table, looking across with unwilling inquiry at his host, who lounged at ease in his chair, watching the younger man with a grim smile, as though reading his every thought. Their relative positions were ludicrously akin to those of judge and prisoner. And the compelling force that lay behind the musement in Caleb's light eyes strengthened the resemblance.
"In the first place," said the Railroader.

"I think you called me a 'cur.' Twice, I believe, you said that. You most likely thought I'd get mad. A cur does get mad when he's called bad names. But a grown risked year life to"—
"To get out of a fight that my own folly had brought on. That was all. I'm afraid my tour wasn't exactly a success. In fact, I fetr it will go down in Mountain state an
The present tenant. All men are born equal, and some of us are local disposes agent for the present tenant. All men are born equal, and some of us are local disposed for the first time with somewhat locates in France had the genius to win out the Napoleon job. You're where you start-less to yelp at, he goes out and picks a scrap with the moon, or at something else to yelp at, he goes out and picks a scrap with the moon, or at something else that's too big is the best man. and if you oughtn't to be looking up to Caleb Conover instead of—"

"And like most of the crowd here," finman's too busy to kick the puppy that yelps

rather be led than to lead themselves. Can you find a flaw in that? Facts is facts, and history is history. Bosses is bosses, and the people are sheep. Is a shepherd in the herding business for his health and to amuse and el'vate the sheep? Not he. He's in the game for the money he can get out of shearing and occasional butcher-

waved him to silence. What happens? The city and the state are run in a way that'd make a schoolbagged in open daylight. The building depack of measiy amachoors and get no service at all. So, back they come to the boss, begging him to get on the job again. Which he does, being a self-sacrificing sort of a cuss, and glad to help the 'plain pe-ople.'

second deputy assistant passenger agent of the C. G. & X. That's where you'd be. And you know it. Had you the brains or the sand to get where I am? Not you. Any

ing. So am I. My own pocket first, last and always. If it wasn't me it'd be another shepherd. And maybe one that'd make the sheep sweat worse'n I do. Clive's lips parted in protest, but Caleb

We've all got 'inviolate rights, eh? leave 'em laying around loose and don't when some one else cops 'em away from you've got a right to prevent me. And you deserve what you sat by and let me do it you'd to Conover, the name of the chairman to the some of the chairman to convert the name of the chairman to the some one else cops 'em away from you've got a right to prevent me. And you deserve what you got a right to prevent me do it you'd to Conover, the name of the chairman to the sound to the chairman to the sound to conover. "You were going to say some wise thing you've got a right to prevent me. And you would. If you sat by and let me do it you'd deserve what you got. If I try to turn the people out of their rights in the legislature and they stand for it who's got a kick coming? Once in a blue moon some man whose brains have all run to lungs—nothing personal—gets up, and shouts to the ing personal—gets up and shouts to the people that they're being conned. Sometimes—not this time, mind you—they be-lieve it, and they throw over the machine and elect a bunch of wall-eyed reformers that know as much about practical politics as a corn-fed dodo bird knows about theolstate are rull in a way that a make a school-boy cry. At the end of one single adminis-tration there's a record of incompetence and messed-up official affairs that takes a cenmessed-up official affairs that takes a century to straighten out. The police have been made so pure they won't let ice and milk be sold for sick babies on Sundays, but they haven't time to keep folks from being sandpartment commissioners are so incorruptible partment commissioners are so incorruptible they don't know a brick from a lump of putty. And the contractors eat up chunks of overpay for rotten work. And so in every branch of government. The people get wise to all this, and they decide it's better to be bled by professionals and to get at least part of their money's worth in decent serv-ice than it is to be bled just as heavy by a

"The administration you describe is the result of fanaticism, not real reform. It—"
"From where I sit, the difference between the two ain't so great as to show to the undressed eye. You speak of lawyers and country editors being bought by my passes. Is there any law making 'em accept those passes if they don't want 'em? Could I buy one of those men if he wasn't for sale? There's just one thing more, and then your little lesson'll be over and you can run home. All through this delightful little re-union you've kind of took the 'holier-thanthou' tone that's such a pleasing trait of you reformers when you're dealing with mere sane folks. Now, the best thing you can do is to take that food idea out for a walk and lose it, for you not only ain't any better than me, but ain't half the man, and never will be half the man I am. You were born with a gold spoon in your mouth. The spoon was pulled out after you grew up. but not till you had your education and your profession. What did you do? You'd had the best advantages money could buy you. And for all that, the most you could rise to was a measly every-day law practice. That's all the dividends the tens of thou-sands of dollars invested in your future were ever able to declare, or ever will be able to. I started life dead broke. No education. no pull, no cash, no prospects. I don't know just how rich I am today, but no one's going to call you a liar if you put it at forty millions. And I'm bossing bigger territory—and bossing with more power—than half the so-called high and mighty kings of Yurrup. Now, s'pose you'd started where I did? Where'd you be today? You'd be the 'honest young brakeman on the branch road,' or at best you'd be 'our genial and rising young feller-townsman,' the

put up to their memories. How about the Uncle Sam's buying a whole nation of Filipinos and coolly telling 'em: 'I'm bossing your islands now. Listen 'to me while I soften your rebellious hearts with the blessed gospel of the gatling gun.' Yet Uncle Sam's all right. So's John Bull, who done the same trick only worse in India done the same trick, only worse, in India and Egypt. No one's going to call America or England or the Pilgrim Fathers dishonest and crooks, is there? Then why do you call Caleb Conover dishonest for doing the same thing, only a lot more squarely and mercifully? The crook of today is the hero of tomorrow. And I'm no crook at that. Why, son, a hundred years from now there's liable to be a statue stuck up somewhere of 'Caleb Conover, Railroader, Cham-pion of the People.' Honesty, eh? What you call 'honesty' is just a sort of weak-kneed virtue meaning lack of chance to be grabbing his state. And he doesn't. Do you s'pose for a second that I, or Tom Platt, or Richard Croker, or Charley Murphy, or Matt Quay or any other boss something else. 'Honester than me' means 'less chance than me.' The honestest community on earth, according to you reformers' way of thinking, is in the state peni-For not a crime of any sort's committed there from one year's end to the

"Well," vouchsafed Caleb, grudgingly, "that's an answer anyhow, and it comes

Conover chuckled softly to himself, then "And there's something else about me

"And there's something else about me that ought to make 'em sculp a halo onto that same statue. What I've done to build up my pile I've done open and with all the cards on the table. I have called a spade a spade, and I haven't referred to it, vague-like, as an 'industr'l utensil.' I ague-like, as an 'Industr'l utensil.' ner on my deals. What I've took I've took. and I've said, 'Whatcher going to do about it?' I've won out by strength, and I ain't ashamed of my way of playing the game. I haven't talked through my nose about being one of the noble class picked out by Providence to watch over the wealth that poor folks'd have had the good of if I hadn't grabbed it from 'em. And I haven't tried to square myself On High by endowing colleges and heathens and libraries and churches. I guess a sinner's hush-money don't make so much of a hit with the Almighty as these philanthropist geezers seem to think it will. What I've given I've given on the quiet and where it'd keep folks from the poor house. When it comes to the final show-down on Judgment Day, I've a sneaking notion the out-and-out pirate-me, if you like-will win out by about rate—me, if you nke—will will out by about seven lengths over the holy hypocrite. That's another reason why I tell you you're wrong when you say I ain't honest. I don't hope to convince you by any of the words I've been wasting. If you were the sort of man reason could reach you wouldn't be a reformer. I've squan-dered enough time on you for one evening. Save all the pat replies that I can see

Unceremoniously as he had entered the as he would. "I talked more'n I have since that fool

speech of mine at the reception," muttered the Railroader as he clattered down the broad staircase. "But I steered him off from the chance to say what he really wanted to, and I dodged any scene that would be of use to him in his campaign.
Too bad he's a reformer! He's got red
blood in him, the young idiot. Yes, and
he's not such an idiot either if it comes to

Clive Standish, descending the stairs a moment later, puzzled, disappointed, vaguely aware that he had somehow been tricked, heard the shout of a groom and the thundering beat of Dunderberg's flying hoofs along the gravel of the drive.

he was as much master of the situation and as content with himself as he tried to make me think," reflected Clive as ever ride like that."

Standish went to the teague's headquarters, where for two hours he busied himself with routine affairs, and tried to shut out memory of the deep, taunting voice and masterful, amused eyes that had held him captive, and had turned him from the real purpose of his visit. And in time the light, sneering eyes deepened into liquid brown, and the sonorous voice into Anice Lanier's. For whatever theme might form any particular verse of the day's song for Clive, he noticed of late that Anice was ertain to be the ever-recurrent refrain. Wearied with his evening's work, Standish returned late to his own rooms. His man said, as he helped the candidate off

with his light covert coat: "A messenger boy brought a letter for you, sir, about an hour ago. He said there was no answer. I left it on your desk."

Clive picked up the typewritten envelope listlessly and tore it open. It contained a note, also typewritten, and a thicker enlosure. He read:

to Conover, the name of the chairman to be chosen for next week's state convention, and a rough draft of the plan to be used for your defeat. Next to each detail you will find my suggestion for blocking it. You owe it to yourself and to the people ta take advantage of what I send you."

"He's right, whoever he is!" exclaimed Clive, half-aboud. "It's the only way I can fight Conover on equal terms. There's no fight Conover on equal terms. There's no sense in my standing on a foolish scruple when so much hangs on the result of the convention."

He snatched up the enclosure which had slipped to the floor. Irresolute he held it for almost a minute, his firm lips twitching, his eyes cloudy with perplexity. Then, with a sigh of self-contempt he slipped note and enclosure in a long envelope, addressed it and rang for his man. "See that this is delivered tonight."

ordered. The valet, as he left the room, glanced surreptitiously at the envelope's address. To his infinite bewilderment he saw the superscription: "Caleb Conover, Esq., 167 Pompton Avenue. Personal."

There was a terrible half hour in the Mausoleum that night.

CHAPTER IX. A Convention and a Revelation.

The day of the state convention! The convention hall at Granite was a big barn-like building, frequently used for church and school entertainments, and occasionally giving a temporary home to some struggling theatrical company. For the holding of the convention which was

to name the governor of the Mountain state

a feeble attempt at decorating the vast in-

terior had been made by Conover's state

chairman. On the front of the dingy little stage were a table and chairs for the officers, and a series of desks for the reporters of the local and New York newspapers. Across the back hung a ragged drop curtain showing a garden scene in poisonous greens and in-flammatory reds. Stuck askew on the pros cenium arch were crudely-drawn portraits of Jefferson and Andrew Jackson. Between these alleged likenesses of democracy's sponsors, Billy Shevlin had, by inspiration

and acclaim, caused a huge crayon picture of Caleb Conover himself to be hung. This monstrous trio of ill-assorted porstruck the eye as one entered the main door at the front end of the hall. On see-ing them, grim old Karl Ansel had cast about him until he located Shevlin and a group of the Railroader's other lieuten-

"Say, Billy," he drawled in tones that penetrated the farthest corners of the audi-torium, "what did you want to show your torium, "what did you want to show your ignorance of the Scriptures for by hanging Conover's picture in the middle with Jackson and Jefferson on the outside? You've got things reversed. In the original it was the Just Man who hung between two thieves. You ought to have put your mug and Conover's up there with Clive Standish in the center if you wanted to carry out the right idea." the right idea."

And Shevlin, in no wise comprehending. looked for the first time with somewhat

"I am the better man," answered Citve quietly. "And so is any honest man. And I can look down on you for the same reason ished Ansel, "they were sold to Conover before the convention began."

There was the usual noise and tramping of feet and clamoring of brass bands, the customary rabble of uniformed campaign clubs with their gaudy banners and pompous drum majors about the hall and in it for an hour before the time that had been set for the calling of the convention. Here there and everywhere circulated the ore the convention began. any square American can look down on a political boss. Because we are honest and you are not." "that's an answer anyhow, and it comes nearer being sense than anything you've said so far. But you're wrong for all that. You talk about honesty. What's honesty? The pious Pilgrim Fathers came here and swindled old Lo. the poor Indian, out of his country in a blamed sight more raw fashion than I've ever bamboozled the people of the Mountain state. And the Mountain staters were willing, while the Indian wasn't. Yet the old settlers are called 'nation builders' and 'martyrs,' and a lot of Here, there and everywhere circulated the busy lieutenants of Boss Conover. Their master, with a little coterie of chosen lieu-tenants moved early into his headquarters in one of the rooms at the rear of the stage, where he sat like some wise old spider in the heart of his web, sending out warnings, advice and admonitions to his

understrappers.

Although Conover was leaving no raveled ends loose in his marvelously perfect machine, he took his wonted precautions more tion builders' and 'martyrs,' and a lot of other hot-air titles, and they get statues through force of habit and for discipline through force of habit and for discipline's sake than through any necessity. He felt calmly confident of the result. He had looked upon his work and he had seen that it was good. Even had Standish been the choice of a majority of the people in all eight counties of the state, it would have availed him little, for through the routine tricks whereof the Railroader was past master, his young opponent was at the last able to control the votes of but two counties—Matawan and Wills.

Standish's contesting delegates from the other six counties sat sullen and grim in the gallery. Fraudulent Conover delegates, who had usurped the formers' places by the various ruses so successfully put into action at the caucuses, held the credentials and occupied the seats belonging by rights to the leaguers on the floor of the con-vention hall. There the machine delegates smilingly sat and awaited the moment when they should name their boss as candidate for governor.

From the seats of the usurners there went up a merry howl of derision as Standish's two little blocks of delegates from Matawan and Wills marched in and took their places well down in front, where they formed a pitifully small oasis among the Conover delegates from Bowden, Carney, Haldane, Jericho. Sparta and Pompton counties.

There was no cheering by the Standish delegates on the floor of the convention.

Nine out of ten knew that it was practically a hopeless fight into which they were about to plunge, and they knew, too, that not one of them would have been given his rightful place as a delegate had it not been that even Conover feared to outrage sentiment in those ever-turbulent rural counties, as he had done in the larger and more "loyal" sections of the state.

Karl Ansel, with an inscrutable grin on

his long, leathery face, might have sat for a picture of a typical poker player as he slipped into his place at the head of the Wills county delegation. If the shadow of defeat was in his heart, it did not rest upon his lignum vitae features. What mattered it that his every opponent was smug-ly aware that the league's cards were deuces? It was Karl's business to wear the look of a man secure behind a pat flush. And he wore it. But at heart he was sore distressed for the hopes of the brave lad he had learned to like so well. And, as he watched the swelling ranks of Conover delegates, his sorrow hardened into Standish was nowhere in sight. Fol-

lowing the ordinary laws of campaign etiquette, he did not show himself before the Save all the pat replies that I can see you're bursting with, and spring 'em at your next meeting. I've no time to listen to 'em. Good night."

Linear amount of the nomination; but, like Conover, sat in temporary head-quarters behind the stage. About him were a little knot of civic leaguers, some of them men who had some of the nomination; delegates in advance of the nomination; sonal violence in the campaign in their room he quitted it, leaving Standish to go fight to obtain a square deal for the young reformer against the juggernaut onrush of the machine. One and all they were Job's comforters, for they knew it would take a miracle now to snatch the nomination from the railroader's grip.

Promptly at 12 o'clock Shevlin, in his newly acquired capacity of state chairman, called the convention to order. He had judiciously distributed bunches of his best trained shouters where they would do the most good. This claque, glad to earn their money, kept an eye on their subcaptains and cheered at the slightest provocation. They cheered Shevlin as he brought the gavel down sharply on the oak table in front of him and went through the customary rigmarole of announcing the pur-poses of the convention. They cheered when he named the secretaries and assistant secretaries who would act until the he passed out into the darkness, "he'd permanent organization had been effected.

Through the din the little square of Standish delegates from Wills and Matawan sat grim and silent, while the contered to one another under their breath their yearnings for the opportunity to take personal payment on the bodies of those who had ousted them from their lawful

test of strength would come upon the selection of the committee on credentials, since it was to this committee that the contests of the six larger counties for the right to sit in the convention would go for settlement. By an oversight common clause in the party laws setting forth the procedure to be followed in the selection of the committee of a state convention At preceding conventions the chairman had invariably (and justly) ruled that only dele gates whose seats were not contested should be entitled to a hand in the selection of the committee on credentials, for custom holds that to permit delegates whose seats are contested to have a hand in the selection of the committee would be like allowing men on trial to sit as jurors.

On the observance of this unwritten rule hinged Clive Standish's last and greatest hope. If this precedent were to be followed now, it would, of course, as he had pointed out to the doubting Ansel, result in the selection of a committee by the Standish delegates from Wills and Mata-wan counties, since in those counties alone there were no contests. This must mean Staked it, forgetting the endless resource and foresight of his foe. For Caleb Con-over had no quixotic notion of giving his rival any advantage whatever. On the pre-ceding night he had written out his decree. This command Shevlin now hastily read over before acting on it: "Announce that the chairman rules there

credentials from each county, regardless of that county's voting strength, and that the delegates holding the credentials from each county shall be allowed to choose those committeemen. To the layman such an order may mean

little. To the convention it meant every-thing. Six counties were, officially, for Conover. Two for Standish. Thus eighteen of Caleb's adherents could, and would, vote to ratify the seating of the railroader's delegates. The opponents of this weird measure could muster a numerical force of

Meanwhile, the preliminary organization of the convention had been effected with-out much delay. The Standish delegates, knowing the futility of making a fight at this time, had raised merely a perfunctory opposition to the nomination of Bourke as temporary chairman. Through Bourke (by way of Shevlin) Conover now proclaimed his plan of choosing the all-important com-

Bourke, well drilled, repeated the decision in a droning monotone. Instantly the convention was in the maddest uproar. All semblance of order was lost. Bedlam broke loose. In the gallery the contesting Standish delegates writhed in impotent rage, leaning far over the rail, shaking their fists and howling down insult, curse and

On the floor the delegates from Wills and Matawan were already upon their feet, yelling furious protests, shrieking "Fraud;" "Robbery!" and kindred pleasantries, without trying or hoping to secure recognition Foreseeing the inevitable trend of affairs.

the Conover "heelers" and the fraudulent delegates from the six larger countries had been prepared for this. At a signal from Billy Shevlin they burst into a deafening uproar of applause.

The furtive-faced Bourke rapped on the table, but the bang of his heavy gavel was unheard. The Standish delegates would not

want to be A dozen fist-fights started simultaneously A 'longshoreman-Conover district captain from one of the "railroad" wards of Gran-ite-wittily spat in the face of a vociferat-

ing little farmer from Wills county, and then stepped back with a bellow of laughter at his own powers of repartee. But others understood the gentle art of "retort courtheous" almost as well as he. Losing for once his inherited New England calm, Karl Ansel drove his big gnarled test flush into the grinning face of the dock-rat, and sent him whirling backward amid a splintering

As the 'longshoreman staggered to his feet, wiping the blood from his face, the sergeant-at-arms (foreman of a C. G. & X. section gang), made a rush for Ansel, but prudently held back as the gaunt old man fell on guard and grimly awaited his new

"I've seen forty pictures of Judas Is carlot in my time," he thundered, apostro phizing the portrait in a nasal voice that rose high above the clamor, "and no two of them looked alike. But by the Eternal of them looked alike. But by the Eternal they all were the living image of you!"

Then he went down under an avalanche of Conover rowdies, giving and taking blows as he was borne headlong to the Through the tumult the pounding of Bourke's gavel upon the table was like the unheeded rat-tat of a telegraph ticker in a tornado. It was fifteen minutes be-fore a semblance of order had been re-stored. By that time there were on every side a kaleidoscopic vista of bleeding noses, torn clothing, and battered, wratful faces. interim of fruitless rioting, the machine had its way. Over the hopeless protests and bitter denunciations of the tricked minority the empty form of choosing the com-mittee on credentials was carried through As a foreseen result. Standish had but six members on the committee, three from Wills and three from Matawan, while from

halting below the stage, shook his chenc

fist at Caleb's crayon likeness

The contest was over. The Standish dele gates offered but a perfunctory opposition to the work of choosing the committees on organization and platform. This much having been done, the convention took the usual recess, leaving the committees to into session in separate rooms back of the

the Conover faction eighteen were to sit in

judgment upon the merits of their own

stage.

The delegates filed out, the men from Wills and Matawan angry and silent in their shamed defeat, those from the six their shamed defeat, those grapherant gleen victorious counties crowing exuberant gle-at their easy triumph.

The adjournment announced. Clive slip ped out of the convention hall by a rear entrance and went across to his private office at the league rooms. He wanted to be alone—away from even the stanchest friends—in this black hour. Against all counsel and experience, against hope itself, he had noped to the last. His buildog pluck, his faith in his mission, had upheld him above colder, saner reason. Even the repeated warnings of Ansel had left him unconvinced. Up to the very moment Conover's final successful move was made Standish had hoped. And now hope was

dead.

He was beaten. Hopelessly, utterly, starkly beaten. From the outset Conover had played with him and his plans as a glant might play with a child. no question of open battle, with the weaker antagonist battered to earth by the greater strength of his foe. Far worse: the whole campaign had been a futile struggle of an enmeshed captive to break through a web too mighty for his puny efforts, while his conqueror had sat aclmly by, awaiting a victory that was as sure as the rise

Standish knew that in a few minutes he would be able to pull himself together and face the world as a man should. In the interim, with the hurt animal's instinct, he

wanted to be alone.

Save for a clerk in the antechamber, the league's rooms were deserted. Every one was at the convention. The clerk rose at Clive's entrance and would have spoken, but the defeated candidate passed unheeding into his own office, closing the door be Then, stopping short his back to the

closed door, he stared, unbelieving, at some

one who rose at his entrance and hurried forward, hands outstretched, to greet him. "I knew you would come here!" said Anice Lanier. "I felt you would, so I hurried over as soon as they adjourned. Aren't He still stared, speechless, dumfounded She had caught his unresponsive hands. and was looking up into his tired, hopeless eyes with a wealth of pity and sympathy that broke through the mask of blank misery on his face, and softened the hard

lines of mouth and jaw into a shadow of a "It was good of you to come." he said at

last. "I thought I couldn't bear to see any one just now. But—it's so different with you. I——" He ceased speaking. His overstrung nerves were battling against a childish longing to bury his hot face in those cool little white hands, whose lightest touch so thrilled him, and to tell this gentle, infinitely tender girl all about his sorrows. his broken hopes, his crushed self-esteem In spirit he could feel her arms about his aching head, drawing it to her breast;

could hear her whispered words of soothing and encouragement. Then, on the moment, the babyish impulse passed and he was himself again self-controlled, outwardly stolid, realizing

is loneliness. "I am beaten," he went on, "but I think we made as good a fight as we could. Per haps another time—"
She withdrew her hands from his. Int. her big eyes had crept something almost

akin to scorn. "You are giving up?" she asked incred-ulously. "You will make no further effort "What more is to be done? The com

mittee on credentials—"
"I know. I was there. It's all been a wretched mistake from the very begin-ning. Oh, why were you so foolish about those letters? "Letters? What letters?"

"The letters sent you with news of Mr Conover's plans for-"Those anonymous letters I got? What do you know...."
"I wrote them," said Anice Lanier

(T o be continued next Saturday.) Peril of Travel in North China.

Manchester Cor. Rochester Herald. We were going up a dry river bed and soon met the water coming down the road first filling the ruts, then the whole road way, and soon we were in a foot of swif water. I was riding ahear and saw the water coming down three gullies and meeting just ahead of us, making quite a breast wave," writes the Rev. W. H. Sprague, formerly of Shortsville but now a missionery in north China, to a friend here

"I turned to call attention to the peopl in the tarantass to the 'big water' when I saw the driver whipping up his horses ou to a light bank. I quickly made for the same high ground and had barely reached it when the great wave flood rushed pas us three or four feet deep and carrying muand stones with it. A few miles back we had just passed a large flock of fat sheep and a string of eighty ox carts and whave now heard that many of these sheep and several oxen and carts, three camel and three men were all carried away by

in describing a mountain torrent of Mon

"These mountain torrents are much to be feared as these valleys have much of the way such steep sides that it is difficult for heavy carts to get out of the way of these floods. A few weeks ago there was a regu lar cloudburst at Kalgan, and a great floor came with a breast wave ten feet high right through the main street of the city destroying houses, shops and goods to the value of \$10,000, and sweeping away to death more than two hundred persons."

Use for Dogwood. From the Franklin Press. There is considerable demand in this and

surrounding counties for dogwood at this time. The Torrence Company of Athens Ga., has a mill here, which has been running most of the time now for more than a year. Mr. V. Fontaine of New Jersey has been here for a month or more looking into the dogwood and persimmon of this part of the state. He intends putting up a num ber of sawmilis at different points where these woods are to be had. Mr. Fontaine informs us that he will move his mill into any locality where he can secure as much as 100 cords of either dogwood or persim-mon. The mills here cut the wood up into blocks about 16 inches in length and 3 by 3 These are exported to France or England where they are manufactured into shuttles for the cotton mills and silk mills of the world. A great many of the shuttles used in this countray are brought from abroad after having been made from American wood taken from here in the blocks. This country has only one firm that can make the shuttles to compete with the foreign product, and in this case nearly all the skilled workmen are from France

From the London Chronicle.

Manitoba, the granary of the empire, is rapidly filling up with settlers, but ap-parently there is still room for a few consignments of the fair sex from the old country. A farmer in sending his annual subscription to one of the Winnipeg papers nclosed this note to the editor: "Dear Sir-If you see any women that want to get married, send them this way. I want a wife myself, and a good many more." These opponent's onset.

Ansel, smarting and past all control, ploughed his way down the main aisle, and the writer was doubtless altruistic.